THE

# AMERICAN SOCIALIST.

*DEVOTED TO THE ENLARGEMENT AND PERFECTION OF HOME.*

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## *PREPARATION FOR COMMUNISM.*

THERE are, in our opinion, certain indispensable preliminaries which must be observed in order to insure success in practical Communism. These preliminaries are:

1. Previous mutual acquaintance of the majority of the persons designing to become members.

2. Religious unity and earnestness.

3. A capable leader who shall be unanimously accepted as such and obeyed.

4. Some actual training in giving and receiving personal criticism.

5. A sober calculation as to the means of earning a livelihood. This should include care in the selection of a location.

All these conditions are vital to success. To ignore any of them is to court failure.

## *MUTUAL CRITICISM.*

IX.

HISTORICAL CRITICISM—HYGIENIC CRITICISM.

ILLUSTRATIONS of Mutual Criticism might be multiplied to any extent. Those already given are occupied with the delineations of personal faults and virtues, and show what place criticism holds in the Community school as a regulator of morals, and a harmonizing power. They give also some idea of its value as an agent of spiritual improvement—of its purifying and justifying work—which is often carried into the past life of the members, and is then termed

HISTORICAL CRITICISM.

It is found in many cases, that present difficulties of experience root themselves in the past life, and can be reached only by a process that carries light and judgment and separation clear back to their beginning. A yielding to temptation in former years, by which we admitted the spirit of evil and defiled our consciences, or the entanglements of evil associations through friendship and love, though they may have been long excused and forgotten, were nevertheless vital seeds in our life, and are found, on close scrutiny, still active, and operating in our central experience. Life is a ball, made up by the winding on of the thread of our passing experience; and whatever we have wound in the past, whether good or bad, is still in the ball: it is vitally our own, and in a very important sense enters into our present character. To state the principle in the fewest words, We are what our past lives have made us. With this view, many have entered upon the course of historical self-criticism; and the result has been, numerous confessions of wrongs in the past, that had lain secret—perhaps half-forgotten—but necessarily darkening and poisonous to present experience.

But much as we prize Criticism for effects which are purely spiritual and moral, we must not neglect to speak of it as a hygienic agency. How often have we witnessed a sudden and marked improvement in bodily health as the result of sincere truth-telling. We claim, in fact, to have discovered

A NEW CURATIVE.

A Community writer says: "We have not found, like a certain quack advertiser, an all-healing medicine in a 'common pasture weed,' nor are we prepared to show nostrums with the 'retired Physician whose sands of life are nearly run out;' but we have found, and seen used with the best effect in many instances of sickness, a curative agent that is not far-brought nor expensive, but which we can confidently recommend to our readers as of exceeding value; viz., CRITICISM. It is a common custom here, for a person who may be attacked with any disorder, to apply this remedy by sending for a committee of persons, in whose faith and spiritual judgment he has confidence, to come and criticise him. The result when administered sincerely, is almost universally to throw the patient into a sweat and to bring on a reäction of his life against disease, breaking it up and restoring him soon to usual health. We have seen it take effect at an advanced stage of chronic disease, and raise a person up apparently from death's door. It seems a somewhat heroic method of treatment when one is suffering in body, to apply a castigation to the life through the spiritual or moral part; but this is precisely the thing needed to cleanse and purify the system from disease. We have tried it and found it to be invaluable. To all who have faith in Christ as a physician we can commend this prescription as a medium for conveying his healing and life. If you are sick, seek for some one to tell you your faults, to find out the weakest spot in your character and conduct; let him put his finger on the very sore that you would like most to keep hid. Depend upon it there is the avenue through which disease gets access to you. And if the sincerity which points this out and and opens it to the light, hurts, and is mortifying for the time, it is only a sign that the remedy is applied at the right place and is taking effect."

Take an example from the Community records:

"S. P. having a bad cold and symptoms of a run of fever, tried the *Criticism-cure* and was immediately relieved. She was on the bed in a state of pain and restlessness, when a friend mentioned to her the above remedy, as having been successfully applied in similar cases. Having some faith in it, she arose and had it administered without delay. The operation was not particularly agreeable—there is no method of cure that is—but it was short and speedily efficacious. One secret of its efficacy is, it stops the flow of thought toward the seat of difficulty, and so tends directly to reduce inflammation. At the same time it has a very bracing, invigorating effect. In the present case, it went right to the cause of the disease, which was discovered to be a spirit of *fear*, throwing open the pores and predisposing the subject to the attack. S. P. had been brought up in a bad habit in this respect, expecting with every exposure to take cold—and then expecting to have it go on to a serious cough, and so on—fear realizing itself. Criticism stopped this false action, and not only made her well in the first instance, but by breaking up this fear it has given her comparative security against future attacks. It requires some fortitude and self-denial in the patient, when he thinks he needs sympathy and nursing, to take criticism instead; but it is well known, that to rouse the will to strong exertion is more than half a cure. The criticism-remedy professes to be universal, and is recommended for trial to all the afflicted.

Individuals may find it difficult in some cases to get access to this remedy, but it is worth some pains to try. Every family should have the apparatus. Children can have the benefit of it in forms adapted to their age. A little wholesome correction is sometimes the best medicine for an ailing child; and it is certainly a more merciful remedy than nauseous pills or castor-oil. Quite young children, however, can take a family criticism in the regular way, and get the advantage of it.

The theory of disease which this remedy adapts itself to is, that disease originates not in the blood, or stomach, or nerves, but in the spirit, and that a decisive operation there affects the whole system." *

Here is another example on a large scale:

Some twelve years ago that fell destroyer, the diphtheria, made its appearance in the Community. It first attacked the young men, then the young women, then the middle-aged, and finally spared no class. One hundred and twelve persons were affected. Three of the first cases proved fatal; two other deaths soon occurred. All known remedies were tried; the doctors were appealed to; but nothing was found to stay the scourge until criticism was brought into the field in connection with the free use of ice; and after the new treatment was fairly begun no death by diphtheria occurred, and most of the cases were substantially cured in a few hours. When the disease had been fairly routed an investigation showed that not one out of fifty-nine cases of clear diphtheria, treated with ice and criticism, was lost; fifty persons acknowledged sensible benefit from criticism; twenty-two testified that the benefit thus received was instantaneous; and all who reported thought criticism a powerful and useful medicinal agent. The following is a specimen of the testimony:

"My experience in respect to *criticism* was new, and to me interesting. I will relate it as briefly as possible. I was taken at night with a sore throat, which continued to grow worse, and the next day I had all the symptoms of the diphtheria. Being no better at night, but rather worse, I sent for a committee. Their criticism immediately threw me into a profuse sweat, till I felt as though I had been in a bath; and before the committee left the room, my headache, backache and fever were all gone. The criticism had an edge to it, and literally separated me from the spirit of disease that was upon me. I slept well, and in the morning called myself *well*, as indeed I was, with the exception of weakness. I attribute my recovery entirely to the Spirit of Truth administered in *criticism*, and believe it to be the best remedy for soul and body."

The new method of treatment in diphtheria was dramatized by a member of the Community and rehearsed finally on the stage. We give the libretto below, as a curiosity:

MEDICINE FOR THE DIPHTHERIA.

A HIT AT OLD NICK.

*Dramatis Personæ*

GEORGE, *the patient*,
COMMUNITY DOCTOR,
SARAH, *a waiter*,
SEVEN CRITICS,
MARTIN, *a singer*,
A DEMON, *and* AN ANGEL.

*Patient discovered sleeping—but restless, starting and groaning as in a fit of nightmare. A skeleton-demon appears behind, shaking a dart at him. At a dreadful groan, enter Doctor.*

*Doctor.*—(*Shaking the patient*). George, George, wake up! What ails you?

*Patient.*—(*Griping his throat and staring wildly about*). I've had a horrible dream. There was a skeleton standing there as sure as you live. I saw the

flames in his eye-holes, and he shook his dart at me. Did I make a noise?

*Doctor.*—Yes, you groaned as if you were dying.

*Patient.*—I thought my time had come, and I don't know but it has now. My throat feels strangely. I believe I've got the diphtheria. I was dreaming—

*Doctor.*—Never mind your dreams—let me look at your tonsils. (*Looks in his mouth*). Sure enough—you've got it—canker and all. (*Feels his wrist*).—Pulse going like a trip-hammer. But your time has not come yet. This is only the sixtieth case we've handled this winter. We'll put you through the old course. (*Goes to the door and calls.*) Sarah, bring some chopped ice. (*To the patient.*) The first thing to be done is to kill the fungus.

*Patient.*—Kill the fungus! What do you mean by that?

*Doctor.*—Don't you know that a crop of toad-stools is growing in your throat? That white stuff that people call canker is a vegetable. In the microscope it looks like a cauliflower. Ice kills it. Cauliflowers can't grow in ice-water. (*Sarah brings the ice*). Here, eat all you want of this. It is cheap at this time of year, and some folks say it is as good as candy. You are not frightened are you?

*Patient.*—No. But for mercy's sake keep mother out of my sight; for she will be frightened, and her doleful looks and talk will make me a coward.

*Doctor.*—That's a good idea! Keep clear of your mother when you are going into battle. What you want now is not sympathy, but the soldier spirit. Do you believe in God?

*Patient.*—Yes.

*Doctor.*—Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

*Patient.*—Yes.

*Doctor.*—Let us see how much you believe in him. When he was on earth he was a very great doctor of men's *bodies*.

*Patient.*—Yes, I know he cured all sorts of diseases.

*Doctor.*—Do you believe he can cure the diphtheria?

*Patient.*—Of course he can.

*Doctor.*—Keep that idea bright. The next thing to be done is to give you a sweat.

*Patient.*—I thought our folks didn't believe in steaming and packing.

*Doctor.*—They haven't much faith in those things; but I reckon I can give you a sweat in another way. Sarah, there is a criticising committee in the Reception-room. Tell them to come and give George a benefit. (*Sets out the chairs, talking meanwhile to the patient*). We'll put you in a truth-bath that will start the sweat better than steam or feather beds. Don't you want to hear the plain truth about your faults?

*Patient.*—Yes, I'm not afraid of the truth.

*Doctor.*—Well, the devil is, and this is the way we shall scare him off. (*Enter seven critics and take their seats*). Now, gentlemen, let us make short work. George wants help. The old tiger, diphtheria, has got him by the throat. We all know that George is on the whole a good fellow, but what he wants, and what will do him good now, is not praise, but the sharpest criticism. F., will you begin?

[Here followed a deliberate overhauling of the patient's character, general and special, in several rounds, by the seven critics; but as such honest exhibitions are not very pleasant to unaccustomed tastes, and as it is somewhat difficult to do justice to the actual practice of the Community in a fictitious scene, we omit the details of the criticism, leaving them to the reader's imagination; only mentioning that toward the conclusion of the session, the patient was observed to mop his face from time to time with his handkerchief, as though something were coming to the surface.]

*Doctor.*—That will do gentlemen. I think George ought to thank you for a good washing. (*Committee pass a pleasant word with the patient, and exit*). Now George you see yourself as others see you; and (*feeling the patient's face and hands*) you're in a fine sweat—got it easier too than you could by steam and red pepper. Fever's all broken up. You'll be all right to-morrow.

*Patient.*—(*Getting up and straightening himself*). I do feel better.

*Doctor.*—Don't be in a hurry to get well; you know they criticised you for going to extremes. Lie down and go to sleep, and I'll warrant you'll see something better than old Bones with his dart. (*Patient lies down*). I'll give you an opiate too. Martin! Where is Martin? (*Enter Martin*). Here, Martin, is a chance for your genius; I want you to sing that boy to sleep, and to pleasant dreams.

*Martin.*—What shall I sing?

*Doctor.*—Sing that song about the boy's guardian angel, that I heard you practicing the other day.

*Martin.*—I'll try.

(*Sings. At the last line of each verse, a kneeling angel appears behind and above the sleeper*).

*THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.*

A dying mother blessed her boy,
As earth was fast receding;
Her faith grew bright;—she saw on high
His guardian angel pleading.

The boy was man;—the strife of life
Was fierce, and he was bleeding;
But through the fight his faith still saw
His angel ever pleading.

The man was old;—his eye was dim;
His path toward night seemed leading;
But through the dark his faith still saw
His angel ever pleading.

The old man entered death's last shade,
Its horrors never heeding;
For now, as when his mother died,
His angel still was pleading.

[*Curtain descends.*

## *THE ENLARGEMENT OF HOME.*

III.

As far as the masses are concerned, even in this country, the discussion of the question "how large ought home to be," is at present quite premature if not useless; it is, at any rate anticipatory of discussion of another question, which, in my opinion, is more vital and important.

*Why* is it needful that home be enlarged at all beyond the ideal household of our present form of society, consisting of one man for the management of its external, and one woman for that of its internal concerns with the usual accompaniment of their offspring? What is there about home as it is that is too meager and narrow? What are the vital elements of home, as to which the heart of humanity, throbbing in all these socialistic agitations and movements, craves more room and fullness, and as to which some form of coöperation or combination is necessary to secure the best results? Is it in enlargement of the house in which one lives? Is it that we need stately mansions with corresponding appurtenances and surroundings of lawn, garden, walk and grove? In short, is it external or internal enlargement of home that is wanted to make it faultless and complete? These queries suggest the deeper and more important question referred to which is really first in the order of inquiry and the discussion of which will help us more than any thing else to determine how large home ought to be.

I am disposed to think that as respects sensual comforts and enjoyments and security in them, there is little real need of the enlargement of home. It is a fair question whether all needful good in that direction cannot be found in some other way. True, the first thought of social reformers in general relates to external things, to shelter, food, raiment, etc. They see the marked contrast which exists in the condition of their fellows in respect to these things: they see the palace and the hovel standing side by side; poverty, grim want and wretchedness oppressing man on every hand even in the most civilized and highly favored countries, and looking little into the direct causes of the facts they observe, the way of escape is at once supposed or assumed to be in some method of social reform or re-organization, whereby there shall be more equal distribution of the good things of earth, and whereby the condition of the needy and suffering shall be improved by furnishing guarantees against these patent and glaring evils. And experience has shown that a very large proportion, at least, of persons who seek membership and home in any association or Community are attracted by the comforts and enjoyments of sense supposed to be found there. The bread-and-butter question is uppermost. There is many an ardent Socialist whose desires would find ample satisfaction in being insured a sufficiency for bodily wants, and to whom it might be said as to the multitude who followed Jesus in Galilee, "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled."

But, after all, is Communism or any form of Socialism really practicable with such, or necessary for the securing of what the masses need in these respects? Might not every one, save a few unfortunates who are, either through disease or essential defect of mental or bodily powers, unable to care for and support themselves, obtain all that is desirable, or at any rate all that is really useful of creature-comforts without the enlarged home which Socialism proposes to build?

It is true that competism involves a struggle to get and keep, which, to a great extent, combination would enable men to avoid; but earth is fruitful, and human labor is exceedingly productive and rich in its results, and it has not yet appeared what would be the condition of things should industry and economy generally supersede idleness and waste, and men become wise and temperate in the exercise of their appetites and passions, bringing their bodies into that state of subjection which would be indispensably necessary to enable them to live peacefully and well in any enlarged Socialistic home. For, after all that may be said of the oppressions of capital, of the graspings of monopoly, and of the robbery of labor, men are oppressed and robbed more heavily and down-rightly by the demons of lust and passion which possess them. Poverty, want, and the wretchedness attendant thereon are fairly chargeable for the most part to the ignorance, selfishness and animal indulgence of those who suffer from them. And these are neither congruous with Communism or Association, nor can the latter make men wise, unselfish or spiritual who can not be radically though not perfectly so without them; successful Communism or close Association of any kind is impossible where ignorance, etc., exist in the measure commonly seen among the suffering classes.

Poverty and fecundity are very likely to be found together. As with the lower animals which wallow and burrow in the earth there is the greatest fertility, so it seems to be with man, the closer his relation to the dust of earth and to living on what he gets from day to day, the faster he multiplies; or, to say the least, the farther he is from any thought of controlling sexual passion so as to limit reproduction, and by surrounding himself with a numerous and hungry brood he ever lessens his own chances of escape from the material evils which oppress him. It seems too plain for question that a great proportion of the want and misery from which the poor suffer comes directly from the fact of unintelligent and unrestrained procreation. And what a burden would be lifted from the body of humanity could it as a whole but forego such indulgences as tobacco and intoxicating beverages. Think of the millions annually spent in this country alone in using these worse than useless articles. How many there are among the laboring classes, so called, who complain of "hard times," and who inveigh against the oppression of labor by capital and yet who, not descending to the bestiality of drunkenness, day after day and year after year consume enough of the product of their labor in those articles, to supply a moderate-sized family with bread, if not more! The change that would take place in the condition of the masses could they but be persuaded to stop these enormous wastes is hardly conceivable. And then could there be added to the saving thus produced, the saving of the wastes of war on the one hand, which is a destructive use of human energy; and of the wastes of fashion and idleness or the non-employment of human energy on the other, what might not be secured for men in the way of material comforts and enjoyments without entering upon communistic or associative life. Viewing home in its material aspects as an establishment by which one is secured from the inclemencies of the weather, and from the ills and perils of nakedness and want of sufficient sustenance, and in which is provided a store of satisfying material good, could men but be persuaded to confine re-production within rational and healthful limits, to live pursuant to hygienic laws, both as to the quality and quantity of their food, avoiding all hurtful and useless stimulants, such as tobacco and alcoholic beverages, and renouncing all the superfluities and vanities of fashion, and to live peaceably with their fellows, "beating the sword into a plough-share and the spear into a pruning-hook," it may well be believed that though through superior power, some might in a competive state of society, amass to themselves more than enough to supply their own wants, more than an equal distributive share of the world's material wealth, none or few would lack sufficiency; the rule would be abundance; and the occasional inequalities which might exist, could be left to be corrected in other ways than by an interference with the structure of society. And there is in human nature a deep-seated love of personal freedom, a certain pride of independence which finds gratification in being master or mistress of one's own household, small though it be, which must needs be relinquished in the enlarged home of which we write, but which men can hardly be expected to give up for insurance of bread and butter, and which we may safely say thinking men and women will not relinquish unless satisfied there is something higher and more valuable to be gained than those things that concern and minister to the body, in distinction from the spirit. But that there

are things of the above character to be gained, and that to him who would have "his conversation in heaven," such an enlarged home *is* necessary as shall be to him not only an internal aspiration, but also a nurse of external character of divine breadth and excellence, is a profound conviction in many a soul, the chords of whose being have as we believe, been swept by the harmonies of the upper world. Some of these things I propose to discuss hereafter. J. W. T.

## *RECOLLECTIONS OF LIFE IN A SWEDISH COMMUNITY.*

In the summer of 1856 a foreigner made his appearance in Hopedale Community, Mass. He introduced himself as Nelson Hadeen, a minister, and one of a colony of Swedes located at Bishop Hill, Henry Co., Ill. On the evening of the day of his arrival, he was invited to speak in the chapel of the Community, and state the object of his visit. He gave a brief history of the origin of the Bishop Hill Colony. The members of this colony had fled from Sweden in consequence of persecution, and sought a refuge and home in this country. They bought some land where they are at present located, and after many hardships and some persecution from their neighbors, they had succeeded in establishing a good reputation, and were then enjoying a great deal of prosperity, both temporal and spiritual. The question had been brought up in the colony, as to the feasibility of introducing American ideas with their own, into the plans of government and education; and for the purpose of settling this question it was thought advisable to send out some one of their number to visit the various associations which were in successful operation, and to learn as much about them as was possible in a brief visit. Mr. Hadeen had already visited some of the foreign associations which he had met with on his way here, and it was his purpose to visit the Shakers on his way back. Another object which he had in view, was to invite some American families to take up their residence with them, as in this way his people would become acquainted with our language, and with American manners and customs.

His remarks were made with a straightforward simplicity which captivated many of his hearers and had the effect which he desired, as three entire families, and a father and son of another, finally responded to his invitation and took up their residence among the Swedes. An account of this experiment, given by an eye-witness, may not be uninteresting.

With my family I took my departure from Hopedale in January 1857, and after a journey of several days arrived at Galva about four miles from Bishop Hill, on the railroad. From here we were conveyed by sleigh to the colony. We met with a cordial reception from Hadeen and others, and hopes were expressed that the introduction of Americans into their society would prove a move in the right direction. Our American friends who had preceded us, were already engaged in business, and seemed well pleased with their situation.

The colony consisted of about 800 members. They possessed between 8000 and 9000 acres of land, over a third of which was under cultivation. They had two large unitary dwellings, besides a number of small ones; also a meeting-house, a hospital, a broom-factory, and a brewery; a tavern for the accommodation of strangers, and a store where they kept a supply of goods for their own people, and for sale to outsiders. The village was laid out on four sides of a square. On the south side of this square stood one of the unitary dwellings, which contained, besides the private rooms of the various families which occupied it, a large schoolroom. Here the children were taught by an American teacher, to read, spell and write. Their views of education were limited to the idea that if all their people could learn to read the Bible, that was sufficient; more than that would be a snare and temptation to worldliness. A public road ran along the west side, on which was situated the store, two or three brick houses, and the tavern. The hospital occupied the north side. On the east side was the meeting-house and another unitary dwelling. The ground floor of this dwelling was used as a dining-room for the members of the colony. Meetings were held in the meeting-house on Sundays, and sometimes during the week. In the commencement of the colony, broom-making had been their main dependence.

In one of the brick houses on the west side of the square, a room was assigned to my family, and here my life on the prairies commenced. My window commanded a view of an extended stretch of country, perfectly level, with scarcely a tree in sight. Here was one of the great prairies of the West which I had often wished to see. At first I enjoyed it, it seemed so vast, but it soon became monotonous to me. I missed the rocks and hills of the East. I wondered if my life there would be as unvaried as that landscape. We shall see.

I soon became interested in the people by whom I was surrounded. The simplicity of their manners pleased me. Those with whom I became acquainted seemed thoroughly devoted to their religious principles, which, so far as I could understand, were these: They took the Bible as their rule of faith and practice. They believed in the pentecostal principles of the primitive Christians, and that to be true followers of Christ they must hold their property in common. Their views of marriage were those set forth by Paul in 1 Cor., 7th. Those who were the most spiritual among them and formed the center of the Community, because they had been married previous to the foundation of the Community still maintained that relationship; but in faith and practice believed it was good for a man not to touch a woman. Marriage was not prohibited, but discouraged, as a distraction. Families had their separate apartments, but it was not an uncommon thing for a father and mother, with their daughters or sons, and sometimes a stranger, to occupy the same bed-chamber. The Bible was the household book. I seldom went to visit any one of the families when I did not find some member of it reading this, to them, precious book.

The business operations of the Community were under the control of those most skilled in finances. In a great many branches of business, women worked side by side with the men. The Swedish women were strong and healthy, and capable of performing labor which is commonly assigned to men. They were of middle stature, broad-shouldered and straight; they wore while at work, home-spun woolen and cotton fabrics, cut plain, with a skirt clearing the ankle; had good-sized feet, sometimes clad with stout shoes, and sometimes naked. They had but little personal beauty, but their healthy, hearty, and good-natured faces more than made up for what was lacking in this respect. It astonished me to see the vigor they displayed in their work. It was not an uncommon thing when a new house was building to see women carrying the hods of brick. The laundry work was done by them, and the basket of clothes carried from place to place on their heads. They made brooms and worked in the field. They were indefatigable workers in their homes, which were kept scrupulously neat and clean. Notwithstanding that hard work made them appear in some respects masculine, they did not lack in those feminine virtues which make home attractive, and a visit to any of the families insured a kindly welcome. There always stood in the fire-place in their houses a small coffee-pot, containing a strong decoction of the beverage. Of this you were expected to partake, a refusal being considered a breach of hospitality.

I generally took my meals in the tavern a few rods from the house which I occupied. This was in charge of the two daughters of the principal minister. One day, after finishing my breakfast, I stepped into the kitchen to see the girls before going back to my room. I found them cleaning the floor, and the manner of doing it was so new to me that I stopped to look on. The carpet had been taken up, the floor swept, and the process of scrubbing commenced. The girls with shoes and stockings off, and their dresses tucked between their knees, proceeded to scrub the floor with their feet. Soap, sand and water were thrown upon the floor, then with scrubbing brush or cloth under foot, they contrived, by an indescribable motion of the legs, to go over the whole floor. This process made it clean and white. When it was dry, the carpet instead of being made to cover the whole floor, was laid down in breadths crossing each other at right angles, leaving a square patch of the white floor to be seen between.

The children of the Community seemed bright, happy and healthy. They were generally obedient and apt to learn; I taught them to sing in English, and found in my intercourse with them an affectionate, docile spirit. On Sunday they met in the chapel before the usual services commenced and were taught in their language to read the Bible. After the meeting they usually sang, either some Sweedish or English song.

The meetings, which were conducted by one of the ministers, of whom there were several, usually lasted two or three hours. The services were similar to the Lutheran form of worship. Their hymns were chanted by the whole congregation, in rather a minor key, which made a mournful impression on me. At their meetings I met the people as a body. They appeared to be earnest and devoted, and as a general thing cheerful and happy, but with the mark of resolute determination in their faces, characteristic of those who live for principles which they stand ready at any time to defend. They had gradually lived down the prejudices of their neighbors, and were quite anxious as far as possible to adapt themselves to the habits of the people with whom they were surrounded. Hence their plan of inviting Americans interested in association to live with them.

This experiment of amalgamation proved a failure, from the fact that the Swedes, though anxious to gain all the advantages which the residence in America might give them, were still unwilling to admit Americans into their councils or allow them to have any voice in conducting the affairs of the colony. On the other hand, the men among the Americans, very little accustomed to submission, especially to those whom they consider inferior to them, ignored the fact that their first business was to comply with the regulation of the Community, of which, as yet, they were but the guests; and combining together, held meetings of their own, harangued, preached and prayed. As a general thing one or other of the Swedish ministers attended these meetings. Warm words passed between the two parties. The subject of education was one matter in dispute. The Swedes, though to some extent divided in their opinions on this point, were still not prepared to be dictated to by those whom they considered as outsiders. At last the Community decided that they could not have peace disturbed by these debates, which, far from accomplishing the purpose intended by the residence of Americans among them, were only making a wider breach between them. We were therefore invited to leave them to the management of their own affairs, after a four months' residence among them, took our departure. Being a woman I took no part in their disputes, and looked with regret on the result of the experiment.

I have always been thankful to those simple, earnest people for one thing. My association with reformers had tended to weaken my faith in the Bible as an inspired book, but the simple earnest faith of these people had gradually taken possession of my mind, and I no longer doubted the teachings of the book which could make so many people of one mind and one heart. My faith in the Bible has never wavered since.

S. L. N.

## *CO-OPERATIVE RELIEF.*

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS LOOKING TOWARD COMMUNISM.

One of the most interesting developments of our present time, and one showing the tendency of the better elements of our present social system towards coöperation, is that called the Relief System, introduced widely among the Odd Fellows, and being extensively tried in the Masonic and other fraternal organizations; and giving, upon trial, the greatest satisfaction.

It consists in a voluntary combination of members, friends, and others, who agree with one another that they will, upon the death of one of their number, pay one dollar as a relief to the widow or family of the deceased. This contribution is made in advance of its being needed; and upon the payment of one subscription, another is made, and stands ready for use in the next case. Thus, five thousand, five hundred, or fifty dollars, according to the number of persons associated, upon the announcement of the death of a member, are ready to be applied, and are applied to the immediate relief of the bereaved family.

Socialists can see how in an improved system of society the necessity for such action would be done away with, or the same results be quite as economically reached. But certainly as a charitable scheme of the present day, it has *rare merits;* among which are—

1. *Simplicity.*—No printed explanations are necessary—all can easily understand the plan; and it allows of no confusion or deceit.

2. *Economy.*—No expense of buildings, office, or other rent, for printing, solicitation, or other innumerable items, is necessary.

3. *Promptness.*—The relief comes at the moment when it is most needed.

4. *Safety.*—There is no accumulation of great funds, furnishing an opportunity and inducement for fraud or loss; and an absolute guarantee exists that the money will be paid when needed.

5. *Ease of Working.*—Few find it difficult to pay a dollar for such a purpose, and if unable, can at any time withdraw from the association.

This system is so admirably adapted to the purpose intended, that it seems likely to interfere seriously with the present system of life-insurance; and already, I am told, it has reduced considerably the number of small insurers. It has also been adopted by the Insurance interest, and already one or more Insurance Companies

have been organized by parties in Connecticut, who foresee the probability of its being substituted largely for the old form of Life-Insurance. There is no need, however, of the public surrendering such a system into the hands of speculators, when it is so easily managed by themselves, and I see no reason why it may not be extensively applied to all trades and professions, or to members of a village or town where intimate acquaintance exists between the people.

Why may not the same idea be applied under certain restrictions, to cases of accident or other misfortune! And why may not other simple contrivances like this be applied to many other of the ills of life; till slowly, but surely, we shall all come to "bear one another's burdens;" and this will be when Communism or Association shall be the prevailing mode of life.

*Boston, August* 28, 1876. C. H. CODMAN.

# AMERICAN SOCIALIST.

*THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER* 7, 1876.

☞ *Persons who send us manuscript and desire to have it returned in case it is not published, must in each instance mention at the time it is sent that it is to be returned, and must inclose to us sufficient money to pay return postage. Unless this be done we cannot undertake either to preserve or return it.*

A CANADIAN friend endows the AMERICAN SOCIALIST with the sum of Twenty-five Dollars. We hope all the force there is in good example will act to procure for this one a general imitation.

WE have received a letter from the secretary of a society of French political refugees in Belgium, requesting us to publish the notice which will be found in another column. The secretary says: "As the Society voted that the resolution should receive the greatest publicity, we hope you will help us in our protestation against the clemency of the Versaillist murderers." It seems the gentlemen think so well of their career in the Paris Commune that they do not want to be pardoned by the present government! Their card is a curiosity.

SOME name should be found before long to designate the man who by his contumacy is guilty of the grave crime of destroying a Community. What shall we call the person who for the sake of his own personal vanity is willing to shatter the Millennial hopes of many, as did Mr. Tubbs, for instance, of the old Alphadelphia Phalanx? Never did a Phalanx possess finer natural advantages than the Alphadelphia. Its home domain, a magnificent plain watered by sparkling springs, was surrounded by vast fields of fertile land and noble forests, and was bounded by a beautiful river which afforded ample water power. Nature was all munificence, but man—Mr. Tubbs wanted to have the mill buildings of this enormous Phalanx (1,300 members) erected on that part of the land which he had owned; but had they been put there the cost of digging the mill-race would have been just ten times greater than if the buildings were put on the more natural site. Every man in the Phalanx naturally voted against Mr. Tubbs's selfish and foolish proposition, whereupon Mr. Tubbs withdrew and gave himself to the business of decrying the Phalanx, and cautioning persons against putting their property into it. This disagreement gave the Phalanx a chill from which it never recovered. Is Communicide a hard enough name for such a man as Mr. Tubbs?

THE three quarto volumes of the last census could employ the student a long time in the work of detaching and setting forth particular facts, in making new collocations of facts, and in drawing fresh conclusions of his own. In those volumes there was a departure from the old method of giving results in figures and tables: certain classes of facts were set forth graphically by means of colored maps. That mode of condensation proved very acceptable, and Congress gave the Census Bureau permission to apply the method more extensively. The result is a Statistical Atlas of the United States, based on the results of the ninth census, 1870, with contributions from many eminent men of science and several departments of government, compiled by Francis A. Walker, superintendent of the 9th census, and Professor of Political Economy and History in the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale College. A friend has laid a copy of this splendid work upon our table. A large folio volume with sixty plates and colored maps of the United States. Part first is devoted to physical features; part second to population, social and industrial statistics; and part third to vital statistics. In the one we have colored maps exhibiting the river systems of the United States, the distribution of coal, woodland and geological formations, etc. In another we have maps showing the relative and absolute distribution of our Irish, German, British, American and other elements of population. In vital statistics we have maps showing birth-rates and death-rates in the various parts of the country, from different causes, as from consumption, nervous, intestinal and miasmatic disorders. It is altogether a magnificent condensation of the facts of the census, one which the statesman, journalist, and general student could spend days over with increasing profit and interest.

DR SLADE, the medium, is puzzling the Scientific men in England, by producing manifestations which, after the most careful investigation, they cannot account for in any ordinary way. The phenomena resulting from Dr. Slade's mediumship are very simple, being merely intelligible writings upon a slate lying on a table, upon which is a small bit of pencil. The slate may be furnished by the investigator, if desired, and the medium will not approach within a certain distance of it. Instead of the limitations exacted in the evolution of most spiritualistic phenomena, these manifestations take place in broad daylight; and with no effort on the part of Dr. Slade to prescribe conditions otherwise than those selected by the investigators. Although unwilling to acknowledge the presence of any supra-natural agency, the scientific gentlemen who have examined the phenomena produced by Dr. Slade, were obliged to admit that they were above the suspicion of fraud or self-delusion.

## *COLLEGE BOAT-RACING*

DR. MCCOSH, in his letter to the *Tribune*, on the subject of college boat-racing objects to the system as it prevails at present, on the ground of its immoral tendency. His objections are put in a very mild form, perhaps because the Doctor has not given the matter sufficient attention to judge of the subject in all its bearings.

The physical training is the only advantage claimed for boat-racing, but we are at a loss to see the validity of such a claim in connection with institutions founded expressly for mental exercises. If our colleges were places where students lived many years and studied so hard, without intermission, as to injure their health, and if those who did the rowing were the most diligent students, there would be more excuse for moderate exercise, such as rowing or other gymnastic amusements. But having had several years' experience in rowing, training for races, etc., we have had good opportunities for noticing that those of weakly physical development, who most need the exercise, are those who rarely if ever row; and the most diligent students, who alone are liable to injure their health by too close application to study, are the least likely to be found in a boat-race. They will be found among those who are deeply regretting the distraction which such sports bring into the legitimate college exercises. The few years that are usually spent in college are so short, compared with the remainder of a man's active career, that the probabilities of injury by over study, to a man in the prime of life, are very remote; and if they were more imminent, the students who most need the exercise of boating are the only ones who fail to avail themselves of it. Then if we place against the improbable advantages of racing, the certain disadvantages, we shall see that we are taking risks for the possibility of a very small return, such as in any business transaction would be considered preposterous and ruinous. We have never heard of a man who derived any benefit from boat-racing, but we could fill a chapter with accounts of those who have been injured by it, many irretrievably ruined, and in various ways; morally, by forming habits of extravagance, gambling and reckless living; physically, by overtraining and overtaxing the vital powers, and mentally, by neglecting most valuable opportunities for study that can never be recalled.

If we could admit that there was any virtue in boat-racing we should demand that the lists be opened to females also, for it is important for future generations, that women should have all the mental aids that are found necessary for men. Granting all that can be claimed by the most ardent supporters of college boating, there certainly can be no good reason for extending it to competism between different colleges any more than for competing thus openly for mathematical or classical honors; but when it comes to international competism, college boat-racing has so far outreached all bounds of usefulness and common sense, that nobody will be found to defend its use on the ground of any advantage to either the colleges or their students, while the net results, as an international return, have been wrangling rather than good-will.

It has become a fashion with many of the young people of this country to copy after the worst features of English extravagance, and an attempt is making to import the sports and pastimes of an aristocracy to fascinate the rising generations of republicanism; but it will prove a failure. Fox-hunting, four-in-hand-drag-driving, horse-racing, prize-fighting, badger-baiting, cock-fighting, boxing and boat-racing, all belong to the same category; their tendency is not elevating, to say the least, and the growth of such sports in connection with our republican institutions must be abnormal and short-lived: we would encourage our young men to a nobler ambition than to imitate the barbarisms of the past centuries.

England may claim what she will for boat-racing, but the true meaning of the national patronage of such sports is to keep up the standard of national defenses. This meaning may be now lost sight of but it was nevertheless the original purpose of such sports, and the real policy of the public in encouraging them, and the colleges that now engage in them to such excess are preparing "food for powder," instead of training either the best soldiers or the future statesmen and solid thinkers of the country. In times gone by, men were required to be mere muscular machines to make good soldiers; therefore it was in the interest of any nation to encourage athletic sports; but it is found now that the better educated a man is and the more intelligent, the better he is adapted to the new systems of warfare, the style of which has so changed within the past few years that brains are in greater demand than muscles, and a good marksman, though he be a dwarf, rivals the giant. In this, as in many other things, England finds it hard to drop old institutions, ages after their use and purpose have passed away. We need look for no better evidence than our late war affords to prove that the antiquated sports of England are entirely unnecessary to the training of soldiers for national defense. As well may we import the May-pole or the Lord-Mayor's-show as to be imitating the other effete institutions of Britain. There is competism enough in human nature without seeking to develop more by the matching of muscles, and our colleges would do well to direct the relaxations of their students into channels that will be more in keeping with the genius of the free institutions of the country, and with the questions of political economy that are pressing upon us.

In reading the comments of the English journals on the new title conferred upon Mr. Disraeli, one can hardly decide whether it is an advantage or otherwise for a man to be raised to the English peerage. On the one hand, we are told of the honor conferred on Mr. Disraeli by the title of Earl of Beaconsfield, and on the other, we detect a kind of obituary tone in some writers, as if the transfer of a man of talent and capacity from the House of Commons to the House of Lords was a kind of solemn and dignified burial. Probably the age and aristocratic leanings of Mr. Disraeli, will make the change an easy and agreeable one to him; but we cannot forget that when he was younger and more active he declined the proffered honor. When a man like Mr. Disraeli has won, as an author, a familiar reputation, we are loth to substitute for the well-known name, a more stately and high-sounding appellation. The title that a man confers upon himself by talent and application is more honorable than any that can be bestowed upon him by any sovereign less powerful than the king of kings.

THE bridge across the Hudson at Poughkeepsie, on which work is now commencing, will be one of the great efforts of modern engineering, and will rank by the side of such structures as the New-York and Brooklyn bridge, the Victoria bridge across the St. Lawrence at Montreal, and other similar works. The entire length of the bridge, including approaches, will be 3,400 feet, and its elevation above high-water mark will be 130 feet, sufficient to allow the passage of the largest vessels which reach that point on the river. The piers will be five in number, and five hundred feet apart, and the total cost of the work is estimated at $4,500,000. The immediate object of the construction of this bridge is to shorten the distance between the Pennsylvania coal fields and New England. The saving will be such

as to reduce the price of coal in all the Eastern States, and will result in a great aggregate economy to New England consumers, as will be evident by a glance at the reduction in mileage from Scranton, Pa. to a few leading points. The difference in favor of the new route between Scranton and Springfield, Mass., is 93 miles; Hartford, Conn., 127 miles; Boston, Mass., 93 miles; Providence, R. I., 121 miles. The average number of miles saved to all New England points, with the exception of those in southwestern Connecticut, will be something over 100 miles, which will be sufficient to secure for the bridge a permanent traffic, and a certain dividend on the investment.

The following resolution is forwarded to us by the Committee of the "*Societé Française de Prét mutuel et de Solidarité*" established in Brussels by refugees of the Commune:

"Every member of the '*Societé Française de Prét mutuel et de Solidarité*,' sentenced for facts of the Commune, having asked for mercy, or having permitted any one to solicit it for them without protesting, shall be excluded from the Society."

The resolution was adopted unanimously with the exception of a single voice.

*Shakers, N. Y., Sept.*, 2, 1876.

ED. AM. SOCIALIST:—Can any of the readers of the SOCIALIST help me to a poem, beginning:

"I have unlearned contempt. It is the sin
That is engendered earliest in the soul."

Containing also the following lines:

"Oh far from thy chaste eyes remove,
The blotted page, that paints unhallowed love,
That wakes the passions, but mends not the heart,
But only leads to infamy and art."

Yours, G. A. LOMAS.

## *THE WISCONSIN PHALANX.*

### Its Early History---Financial Success---Final Failure.

[Editorial Correspondence.]

*Iowa City, August*, 1876.

BEFORE passing on to Amana, the most prosperous of existing Communities, let me give some account of one of the most promising of all the Phalanxes that flourished and died between the years 1840 and 1850—the WISCONSIN.

This Phalanx was organized in the spring of 1844, and commenced practical operations in the latter part of May of the same year, near where the village of Ripon now stands, and was incorporated by special charter the following winter. It increased its domain to eighteen hundred acres. This was government land, and of course wholly unimproved. There were no settlers in the township when the Phalanx started, and not a house on the domain. The members carried tents, and lived in them until they could build houses. The nearest saw-mill was twenty-two miles distant, and their first houses were built mainly of split logs. While awaiting the construction of these, they cooked their food, we are told, "in the open air, and eat on rough boards, under the shade of a bower, when it did not rain; and when it did, they eat standing, to avoid an excess of rain on the body, and because they could shed rain better in that position." "With scarcely a murmur," says one of the members, "both men and women went through the first cold winter in that severe climate, in rude shanties, made mostly of split logs with plaster or boards; and we had only two buildings 20 by 30 ft., and one-and-a-half stories high for sixteen families—eight families wintering in each, four on each floor—and ate and cooked in one basement with its rough stone walls. It was remarkable." But such is the general experience of all Communities and Phalanxes. At first, privations and hardships are endured with great cheerfulness. There is likely to be more discontent and grumbling in a Community after it has grown prosperous and is supplied with all the necessaries of life than there was when it struggled for the bare means of subsistence.

The annual statement of the Wisconsin Phalanx for 1846 gave their resident members at 180, which included thirty-six families and thirty single persons; and this was probably their largest membership. They were mostly of the working-class. There were no doctors, or lawyers, or ministers among them; but still they must have had men of considerable ability, as one of them was a member of both branches of the State Legislature, of two State Constitutional Conventions, and a candidate for Governor, and three of their number were members of the State Senate.

The Phalanx was a joint-stock affair; and some of the stock was owned by non-members.

They graded labor by the hour, often giving three hours' credit for two hours' labor, and sometimes two hours' credit for three hours' labor.

At the end of each year they appraised their property, and divided a percentage to capital, and the balance of gain for the year to the members, according to their hours of labor as shown by the books.

All were charged with board, etc., at prices as near cost as could be estimated; and it is interesting to note that the cost of board, including labor, did not exceed during one year sixty-three cents per week for each individual.

The Phalanx broke up after six years; but it was still in many respects a successful enterprise, and even its final dissolution appears to have been managed to the satisfaction of all concerned.

It was successful financially, paying a percentage to stockholders from the first, and divided with them eight per cent. at the last. This was owing greatly to two causes; first, its keeping out of debt, and, second, the rapid increase in the value of its land; but the members were very industrious, raising one season ten thousand bushels of wheat and much other grain, and having seven hundred acres under cultivation.

The Phalanx was an arena of free discussion, and yet it never had a lawsuit, and its members never employed legal counsel to settle their disputes.

No intoxicating drinks were allowed on the domain.

The old members boast that they never had a case of licentiousness, nor a complaint of immoral conduct—never had a separation of married parties, and no disputes or discussions on the relations of the sexes.

All religious sects were tolerated, and carried on their meetings together with commendable harmony.

A school-house was built, and some attention given to the cultivation of music.

Their plan of grading labor was generally satisfactory to the members.

With so many conditions of success why should the Wisconsin Phalanx fail? This question is thus briefly answered by Warren Chase, the leading man in the enterprise all the way through:

"It was a social failure, largely because we could not at the time make the home attractive and pleasant. Many thought they could do better with their means outside. We could not induce others with means to join us and purchase the stock of the discontented, as their desire to get out discouraged others and kept them from coming in, until the discontented attained a majority and voted to dissolve. The little town of Ripon, which had grown up near us with whisky-shops, etc., had become a great annoyance, and, with its prejudice, falsehoods and abuse, greatly aided in the dissolution of the Phalanx. We had, to be sure, among our number some grumblers, more especially during the latter part of the time, on account of the hard work and the lack of the conditions of improvement, to procure which we refused to incur debts; but our discussions in the council, which were always public, usually suppressed the grumbling. Still we lacked the system of Mutual Criticism, which would have been of great benefit to us."

In an account of the Phalanx, written soon after its dissolution, Mr. Chase seemed to regard the policy adopted by a small majority, of erecting their dwellings in unitary blocks, as one principal cause of the failure. He says: "It induced many of the members to leave; and though it might have been the true policy under other circumstances and for other persons, in this case it was evidently wrong, for the members were not sufficiently developed to maintain such close relations." He also says, in the same communication, that their property qualification was a bad thing, as they "often rejected the better and admitted the worse, because the worse had the property qualification." Still again, he says there were in the Phalanx, some men of leading intellect who doubted the success of the experiment, and who, gaining important positions in the society, caused much trouble; and "by some they were accounted the principal cause of the final failure." Another says: "The cause of its breaking up was speculation—the love of money and the want of love for Association."

It would be interesting to group together all the reasons which have been given for the non-success of associative experiments; and it would be no less interesting to note that many of them possessed the very conditions deemed most essential to success by others. How many of the scores of Phalanxes and Communities which have come to a premature death have ascribed their mortality to debt, or poor land, or sickness, or laziness, or quarrels about property-titles, or leadership, or religion, or to sexual irregularities. But the Wisconsin Phalanx was always free from debt, had a splendid domain of 1,800 acres in the very heart of the State, in a healthy climate, had no trouble with the lazy ones worth mentioning, no quarrel about property-titles, its principal founder maintained throughout the experiment the confidence of the members and the stockholders, religious differences created no open war, and there was not even a scandal about its social relations; and still it failed like the rest!

Evidently deeper causes must be sought; and until they are discovered and understood it will be useless to multiply experiments. Evidently, too, the conditions upon which successful coöperation in trade and manufactures may be realized are quite insufficient for the more intimate relations of associative and communal life.

W. A. H.

## *COMMUNITY LIFE.*

### AT ONEIDA.

### *A Picnic.*

SINCE the Midland railroad crossed our farm, the towns of Oswego, Fulton, Pulaski—and places of lesser note along the line—have availed themselves of the convenience to make occasional excursions to our grounds, generally in companies of from fifty to five hundred. These picnics were of frequent occurrence during the years 1870-'71-'72-'73. Then we were able to furnish, beside the usual dinner and side-refreshments, an entertainment in the Hall consisting of vocal and instrumental music. But since the disbandment of our orchestra, two years ago, there has been a very noticeable diminution in the number of callers from day to day.

We had about concluded that our time was "served" at entertaining the inhabitants of the Midland villages, when a few days ago the Universalist Church of Fulton asked the privilege of "picnicing" on our grounds. We consented, though informing them that we should not be able to offer them music as on former occasions. This did not deter them from coming, and on the morning of the 31st. ult., the Midland train set down at our door over three hundred people. A large proportion of them carried huge baskets of provisions, and immediately sought the cool shade of the evergreens and apple-trees on the lawn, where they partook of their food in rustic fashion. About fifty persons called for dinner in the usual way.

Our guests were quiet and well-mannered, most of them being members of the Universalist and Methodist Churches. They seemed as desirous of making the occasion a pleasant one to us as to themselves. On their arrival the conductor of the enterprise gave the names of a few of the leading men in the company, and said if we saw any disorderly behavior during the day we had only to report to one of them. But we had no occasion to do so, as the utmost good order characterized this picnic throughout.

The day was a fine one, and the people seemed to enjoy strolling over the lawn and about the buildings. The musically inclined sought the Hall, entertaining one another with music and singing. During the afternoon a dance was proposed, and immediately the children's new play-room was converted into a dancing Hall; the company had a violinist and dancing-master, a pianist and clarinet player, and were able to furnish their own music, while the youths and maidens of the party waltzed and quadrilled, diverting themselves and a large number of lookers-on for over an hour. Then some of the young men retired to the lawn and spent another hour in displaying their agility in ball-catching and throwing; others played croquet, eight of the company tried the Turkish Bath, and others contented themselves in quietly walking about. The train came for them at 5 o'clock, when they left, expressing their pleasure and delight, saying they had enjoyed themselves highly. One member of the party thought the visit equal to going to the Centennial, and said he should come again.

### *New System of Steam-Heating.*

Since we have heated our main dwellings by steam we have been subject to one great annoyance which we did not foresee. Whenever the steam was let on, especially through cold pipes as in the early mornings of winter, a long and disturbing succession of loud thumps resulted, sounding as if some sturdy fellow were striking the pipes with a hammer. There were also disagreeable splashing sounds. These were caused by the fact that our pipes, feed-pipes as well as waste, were put up in long stretches with only a slight upward incline from the horizontal. As the steam condensed against the cold surface of the pipe, the water formed would then try to run downward against the advancing steam, and the fight between the water and steam caused much of the disturbance.

Since we put in our steam-fixtures great progress has been made in the science of steam-heating. The new plan is to run the feed-pipes directly up to the top of the building and then convey the steam downward through the rooms to be heated, on its return to the boiler. The object sought is to make the water and steam travel always in the same direction. Where it is

necessary to take the steam in a direction in which the water will not naturally flow, a small "drip-pipe" conveys the water from the low point into the waste, so that the steam may travel on without obstruction.

During the past summer we have been altering the arrangement of our fixtures to suit the new ideas. It is quite a large undertaking. Next winter will show us whether we have gained or lost by the experiment, both as to economy of fuel, and quiet in the house.

*Croquet.*

THE O. C. croquet-ground is well patronized these summer afternoons by the elderly men—the "grandfather brigade" as they are called. And great comfort they seem to get from the game. The latest rules of this delightful game, which abolish the "booby," the "tight croquet," the special privileges of the "rover;" the "mallet's length," or two strokes after making two consecutive "arches," have simplified the game in a marked degree, and at the same time made it more scientific. In our experience with this game as a Community pastime, we have taken the liberty to "deviate" in some respects from the usual method of playing. Instead of playing the "four-hand" game, where the players content themselves with making the circuit of the arches and then become "rovers;" we play almost altogether in pairs, or triplets, each player independent of the rest, and go "round and round." That is; when a player has returned to the starting-stake he continues right on as though he were beginning the game. In this way the game may be indefinitely extended without the formalities of a fresh start. The "beating," which with us is practically of no importance, consists in making the greatest number of "runs" of the entire sixteeen points, or any portion thereof. Many times we have several "two-hand" games playing at once on the ground. This custom has resulted in the Community rule, called "natural obstructions." It is this: Whenever your ball while in motion strikes another ball not in your game, or comes in contact with any player upon the ground, it is called a "natural obstruction," and the ball is allowed to stop whenever it will. Formerly the custom was in such cases, to allow the player to put his ball wherever he thought it would have gone if uninterrupted in its course. This naturally might lead to difference of opinion between the players, and give rise to disputes. The "natural obstruction" rule works as often in the player's favor as against him and prevents all possibility of discords.

Our croquet-ground is entirely devoid of turf, and kept smooth and level. This has led us to observe that the sale croquet-balls and mallets are usually of unscientific proportions, either as to size or relation between the weights of the balls and mallets. Croquet-balls as found at the stores are large and somewhat heavy, while the mallets are long-handled, and light. These may answer very well when the game is played upon grass, and the players use both hands in striking and stand upright. But skillful playing under such conditions is not to be expected. No one can strike a great pumpkin of a ball with a long-handled light mallet with any assurance that he will accomplish what he attempts, either in hitting another ball or in making an arch. We find that small balls of heavy wood, and short-handled, heavy mallets, *i. e.* heavy in proportion to the ball, will, in the hands of a practiced player, make the greatest number of "runs." With such tools it is not uncommon for our players to make the entire sixteen points without a miss; and there are instances where more than twice this number have been made without stopping. It is simply applying the principles of the rifle bullet to croquet-playing; small projectile; high velocity, and accurate results.

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AT WALLINGFORD.

*Action of the Turkish Bath.*

IT is interesting to note the effect of the Turkish Bath on different persons. For instance: the effect on the "spare" man seems to be the opposite of what it is on the corpulent. We hear almost daily congratulations from the spare ones on their increasing adipose tissue. While those of excessive portliness look with smiling complacency on their diminishing abdominal proportions, and button their waistbands with a congratulatory chuckle. The Bath has lately gained two warm friends from the neighboring town of M., who strikingly embody the two conditions. The one, an old resident, to the manor born, and familiarly called "Uncle John," had been a victim of protracted dumb-ague, and a complication of disorders, till his appetite was gone and he had become a most sallow-visaged and cadaverous object of pity. He came to the Bath reluctantly, in obediance to the importunity of a friend, who had been reduced to much the same condition six months before, and had renewed his health by means of the Bath. His form was so shadowy that when undressed and ready to enter the Bath, he would jestingly call the attention of his fellow-bathers to the "living skeleton." The Baths had a magical effect on him expelling the malarial poison, extracting the "saffron color" from his countenance, whetting his appetite, and in short, toning up his whole system. His acquaintances accost him in the street, and say, "how much better you are looking 'Uncle John!' His answer is "Yes, I am taking Turkish-Baths and growing fat."

Our other newly-made friend of the Bath is a jolly Dutchman "round as an apple, plump as a pear." He came to the Bath looking ruddy and round, and the picture of health. But he shrugged his shoulders, and complained that the rheumatism had got its grip upon him, and was making him sleepless and miserable. He would like to try the Bath. The first one or two Baths seemed to aggravate his troubles, but he persevered, and now testifies that his rheumatism is all gone. He laughs when he draws on his capacious pants, and observing the unfilled space the other day, said; "My belly not so big as before; that is goot."

This rotund Teuton, after listening to the reading of a paragraph from the *Turkish-Bath Advocate*, giving a diagnosis of rheumatism, and alleging that it was caused by the imbibing of too little water, said; "I guess that is my case. *I drink too little water; too much lager.* But then, our city water is *so bad!* If we only had water like yours here, I could drink it." H. W.

*Horticultural*

FIRST Hartford Prolific grapes picked on Sept. 1st.

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IT is a problem at W. C. how to enrich the soil on a steep hill-side where fruit-trees are growing, without plowing. The horticulturist proposes to give it a dressing of bone-dust, and to kill the turf under the trees by applying a heavy mulch of swamp hay; by the way, we are gathering a fine harvest this fall on land above the head of the Community lake.

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THE Red Astracan apple-tree is noted for bearing its apples in clusters, and the fruit, like strawberries, requires picking every other day as one after another in these clusters turns red or soft. It often happens at O. C. that this apple is not marketable on account of its tendency to decay. The reverse is the case here at W. C., the apples remaining good for a long time, on, or under the trees. We have a white, smooth, hard, tart apple, name unknown, that ripens just after the red Astracan, Primate and Early Harvest, closing up a hither to lamentable gap between the very early and the fall apples.

*Big Fly-Catcher.*

THE farmer is exasperated by the fecundity of the potato bug, but his good housewife's patience is put to the test this hot summer by an infinite generation of *flies*. And who ever saw a fly-catcher that was worth any thing? I have to-day, but it was none of your patent jim-cracks. I do not think there is much to choose between the tumbler in the window which our grandmothers used to set, filled with molasses and water and covered with a slice of brown bread, and the traps of more modern invention; the "National," for instance which may be seen in the kitchen of the "easy-to-be-entreated" O. C. To be sure the patent catches more flies than the treacle, but the difference is not appreciable. The catcher I have seen to-day, however, really makes a scarcity of flies in the room for a momentary interval at least. It is not a Yankee notion, but a Western notion as it comes to us. It was the suggestion of a woman who knows all about pioneer life, and is quicker on expedients than any Yankee I ever saw. Make a light hoop, twenty or twenty-five inches in diameter, with a handle to it long enough to reach the ceiling. The hoop we saw was made by splitting down one end of an ash stick and bending the two parts to form the hoop, while the other half of the stick formed the handle. Make a bag of mosquito-netting large enough at the mouth to fix around the hoop, but tapering from the mouth and narrowing to a point at the bottom. From mouth to point the bag should be about a yard long, and the last six or eight inches above the point should not be bigger than your wrist. Sweep this bag across the ceiling and around the room with a lively hand, and you will soon find the pouch at the end full of solid fly, which you can exanimate with hot water or any way you please. A young man in our kitchen to-day caught more flies in this way in a few minutes than the "National" ever trapped in a week.

*STRANGE THINGS*

WHICH HAVE HAPPENED TO PEOPLE I KNOW.

IV.

Many people have what they call "impressions," which are of an unaccountable character. Mrs. N. received a letter from an aged uncle in his last illness asking her to come and take care of him. She was doubtful whether her husband would be willing to spare her; but while she was thinking about the matter she lost consciousness of her whereabouts for a moment and seemed to see herself sitting by her uncle's bedside with a book in her hand. She felt impressed then that she should go. A few moments afterward her husband came in and having read the letter said, "Well I guess you had better go, hadn't you?" And in a few days she found herself sitting by her uncle's bedside with a book in her hand just as she had seen herself doing.

MRS. B.'S STORY.

When my daughter Maria was about seven years old she came home one day from school with her foot somewhat swollen and very red. I thought that when playing in the woods she had poisoned herself with the ivy and would soon get over it; but after a day or two I found her so much worse, that I kept her home from school and set about trying to cure her. Great sores as large as a silver dollar came out on her leg. I made a variety of salves and tried every remedy I could hear of; but the disease, whatever it was, seemed only aggravated. It spread over both legs and then up on her arms. What to do I didn't know. At last, when I was quite worn out with discouragement and anxiety, I sat down alone one day and asked God as earnestly as I knew how, to take her into his care, or to show me some way to help her. To my astonishment, a voice answered, as quickly as you would, "Why don't you soak her feet in milk-and-water?" I had never thought of doing any thing of the kind, and I suppose if I had, I should not have put much faith in it; but I was so impressed with the unexpected and practical reply which came to me when reaching out to God, that, as soon as the cows were milked that evening I got a large pail and filled it with milk-and-water so that the poor girl's legs were immersed as high as her knees. The next morning there was a marked change in her condition. I continued to apply the milk-and-water and in a few days she was entirely restored.

H.'S STORY.

H. has a terrible terrible scar on the lower side of her left arm, extending from the wrist to the elbow. When she was about six months old her mother, who was a very impressionable woman, arose unusually early one morning, built a fire and began putting the house in order, telling her husband that she had a presentiment something was going to happen to little H. and she wanted to get every thing in readiness to take care of her. After breakfast the nurse raked some live coals to the front of the hearth and set a pan of milk on them to warm; then she tied the baby into her high chair and left her a moment with her three-year-old sister, who began playing with her after the manner of children. Little H. was a lively child and when her black-eyed sister ran toward her crying, "Catch-her, catch-her!" she sprang forward with such violence that she threw the chair over toward the fire. Her dimpled face plunged unharmed into the pan of tepid milk, but her chubby, bare arm was buried in the glowing coals. An elder sister, hearing the baby scream, ran to the scene, and her anxious mother came in a moment afterward to find that she had put her house in order none too soon.

MRS. C.'S STORY.

When Mrs. C. and her family applied to join the O. C. word was sent them that when they had settled their affairs with the outside world, they might come. They immediately set about harvesting their crops and disposing of their effects and worked so energetically that after a few months they were able to report to Oneida for orders. A week or more of waiting brought no answer and some of the family concluded that the Community had forgotten them; but Mrs. C's faith in the promise that had been given them remained unshaken. The days went by and still no letter. The situation was very trying indeed and Mrs. C. sat down alone one day to think it over. Instantly after closing her eyes she saw a letter—she could not tell exactly where—which was directed to them and was somewhere on the way to them. She started to her feet and told her friends that a letter was coming from Oneida, for she had seen it as plainly as ever she saw any thing in her life. They were of course somewhat skeptical, but she felt such an assurance of the fact that she immediately set about packing beds, bedding and furniture. For two days she worked with the utmost diligence, but no letter came and then

her friends began laughing at her for her credulity. Nothing daunted she continued her work and by noon next day she had every thing packed except the beds on which they slept, the clothes they had on, and the clothes they were to wear on the journey. Only two mails a day came to that distant prairie village—one at three and another at six o'clock P. M., and it took three days for a letter to come from Oneida. On the third afternoon Mrs. C. dispatched one of the boys to the post-office, which was three miles away. He returned from the three-o'clock mail empty-handed and how every body laughed! But Mrs. C. had another boy all ready to send for the six-o'clock mail and away he went amid the most provoking sarcasms; but as soon as he appeared in sight on his return he waved triumphantly over his head the faithfully expected letter and then jeering was turned to congratulation.

MRS. S.'S STORY.

I have never worn an amulet nor seen a talisman. I can conceive of there being such things. We see that a piece of iron may be charged by a certain process with the wonderful properties of magnetism, and it is not incredible to me that invisible beings should be able to impart occult properties to a trinket. Whether that is so or not, I am a firm believer in what would be called *incantation*. I believe that spirits may be invoked or exorcised by a form of words. I have called to my aid a good spirit many and many a time by a form of words. In life emergencies especially, when I have wanted moral courage, when I have wanted a change of feeling—a softer heart or truer imagination—when I have wanted wisdom deeper and quicker than reason, this form of words has brought me the needed help; "I confess Christ my helper;" "I confess Christ in me the spirit I need;" that is my incantation, and I will tell one story to show the power there is in this form of words to me.

It is about something which happened when I was twenty-seven years younger than I am now; to speak accurately it was in September, 1849. At that time we had no dentist in the O. C., and there was no systematic care of the teeth. My own were in a bad state. I had never had any filled and but one extracted. When I was fourteen years old I had a double tooth drawn with the old-fashioned turnkey-screw in the hands of a village doctor. Poor innocent creature that I was, I had no more idea of what I was going to than has the lamb that is led to the slaughter. The operation was simply *awful*, and a horror took possession of my imagination, which riper years could not dispel. I had the toothache a great deal after that all through my teens, but days and nights of anguish could not give me courage to have another tooth drawn. The moment I got into the dentist's chair that horror would come over me: a frantic scene would follow, and I would go home to wear out my trouble. As I grew older, however, my teeth lost some of their sensibility; I had the toothache less frequently, and for a considerable time before the date of my story, I had been quite exempt from it.

But at that time I came under "pressure of mind" concerning my *cowardice*. It had always been a cause of great self-displacency, but now I saw it between me and my duty, in fact between me and salvation. If I were afraid to have a tooth extracted, how could I follow Christ who said, "If thine eye offend thee pluck it out and cast it from thee," and whose disciples must be prepared to lay down their lives even for the truth? I had weak eyes and the thought followed me that perhaps if I should have my teeth put in good order, it would benefit my eyes; and as good eyesight was very essential in my special field of usefulness, this thought turned the screw of pressure. How small the sacrifice really, to preserve my value to the Community! Finally my mind was wrought upon till I saw that my only path was right through the dentist's gate.

But how to get the courage? How to overcome the confronting horror? How to submit to the operator—to see his instrument upraised and open my mouth, which had always shut as my heart fainted, by as natural an action as the palate guards the windpipe. Well, I betook myself to incantations. I had faith in this resource, founded on experience. As often as I thought of the trial before me I said to myself, "I confess Christ my helper; I confess his courage in me." I felt at liberty to wait till the incantation "worked" (not speaking irreverently, though I keep up my figure), and it did work. After several days a will rose in me to go to the dentist at all events, and I asked a friend to take me. It was a ride of several miles, and all the way I repeated my incantation. I said, "I confess Christ's spirit in me to do as he would do under the same circumstances." I felt utterly helpless in myself, and knew if Christ did not come to my aid I should behave as foolishly as ever. As I took the chair I invoked his spirit aloud. The dentist proceeded. I was calm. He extracted a tooth. I said to him, "Go on; take out every tooth that cannot be saved." The skill of to-day would have saved some of them, no doubt; but he took out seven. I did not flinch nor scream; the horror was completely laid. Indeed, I felt an exultant joy all through the operation, which lasted perhaps half an hour. Afterwards I had my remaining teeth thoroughly treated, and have had almost no trouble from them since. People often say, "What good teeth you have, for a woman of your age."

## *SUMMARY OF NEWS.*

HOME.

Extensive forest fires are reported to be in progress in many of the States.

There is a fair prospect that Gen. B. F. Butler will again be elected to the House of Representatives.

O'Leary, the great pedestrian, is soon to go to England to walk against Vaughn, who has beaten Weston, in London.

An effort is making to divide the State of California into two States, the lower one to have Los Angelos for its capital.

The reduction of the clerical forces in the Treasury and other Departments at Washington, has necessitated a change of working time from six to seven hours per day.

A railroad bridge is to be built across the Hudson river at Poughkeepsie for the purpose of shortening the route from Boston to the coal-fields of Pennsylvania and the West. It is to be constructed by the American Bridge Co., of Chicago.

A fatal case of yellow fever which occurred in Brooklyn a short time ago, has created considerable stir in that quarter, and some complaint of the health authorities for not being prompt in attention to the matter. But it is thought that sufficient precautions were taken by the physician in charge, to prevent the spread of the disease.

A resolution was passed by the Association for the Advancement of Science in America, in their late meeting at Buffalo, N. Y., to the effect that the single gold standard of money value now existing in the United States should be maintained, and all attempts to restore silver to a legal tender should be discouraged.

John D. Lee and Wm. H. Daniel who were indicted in 1874 for participation in the Mountain Meadow massacre, are to have another trial, to begin on the first Monday in Sept. at Beaver, Utah; also Elliot Wilder will be tried at the same time. He was indicted in 1874, but escaped arrest until he was discovered on the 27th of August, at St. George. The first two mentioned were tried last year, but the jury failed to agree.

The Democratic Convention at Saratoga last week nominated Horatio Seymour for Governor and William Dorsheimer for Lieutenant-Governor. Mr. Seymour has served one term as Governor and was undoubtedly the best man the Democrats could nominate. Mr. Seymour had repeatedly refused to be a candidate for any public office, because of the precarious state of his health, which his physicians affirm, will not stand the strain and excitement consequent to the acceptance of any such office. Since the close of the convention he has again decidedly rejected the nomination, or the use of his name in the campaign, so the State committee will be obliged to make the nomination, unless the connection is reassembled. Charges of trickery are very plenty in the reports of the doings of the Convention.

The immediate result of the breaking of the coal combination and the auction sale of 500,000 tons of coal, has been to reduce the price of that article about $2.00 a ton below the prices fixed by the combination previous to its dissolution. Also the stock of the various railroad and mining companies has declined in value, considerably below former quotations. A general suspension of work in many of the mines is reported, and a reduction of wages, by some of the companies, has been accepted by the miners, as they expect soon to have more work, which will counterbalance the reduction. As the coal supply now on hand is limited, it is expected by the coal companies that after the immediate effects of the heavy sales the prices will again advance, and a good trade follow.

FOREIGN.

The insurrection in San Domingo is not yet subdued.

The revolutionists in Mexico have gained a decisive victory over the Government forces at Baranes Rancho.

The ninth session of the International Statistical Congress is now holding in Pesth, Hungary. The United States are not represented in it this year.

There has been another reduction of freight rates to the West. Four of the largest railroads running west have made the rate to Chicago, ten cents per hundred weight. This is below any rate before given.

The exports of meat to England are increasing, as it can be delivered there and sold at a good profit, for half the price of domestic beef. The number of cattle shipped in that way is about five hundred head per week.

Russian volunteers are increasing the Servian armies, and many officers are among the number. Those volunteers passing through Hungary have received some check from the Servian authorities, who have arrested a number of them.

The reports from the war in the East for the past week do not show any great advantage gained by the Turks or their revolting provinces. The struggle around Alexinatz is still undecided, though the Turks seem to have gained some ground on the outskirts of the town.

The elevation of Mr. Disraeli to the Earl of Beaconsfield, is understood by many to be a preliminary to his resignation of the Premiership of the Kingdom. There is much discussion in England as to who will be the probable successor of Disraeli if this supposition proves true.

The effort to obtain an armistice between the Turks and Servians have thus far been unsuccessful, as the Servians will not accept the only conditions on which Turkey will grant it. It is, in fact very uncertain that the party which controls the Servian Government, would consent to any propos-ls of peace, short of the full surrender by Turkey of all right to Servia as a tributary province. Also Prince Milan or his officers would be deposed immediately, on any action contrary to the dictates of the war party, and Prince Peter Karageorgewitch placed on the throne of his grandfather Karageorgewitch who first revolted and drove out the Turks, in 1804. Though the powers of Europe have taken initiatory steps toward meditation between the Servians and Turks, it is doubtful whether any satisfactory result will be gained.

The Spanish Government has, it is said, completed a loan from several of the capitalists of Spain, of from $15,000,000 to $25,000,000 at the rate of 10 per cent. interest, with 2 per cent. additional for expenses. This amount is to be furnished in separate installments, and is to be used to continue the war in Cuba.

A primary school teacher of our acquaintance undertook to establish sound theological principles in the minds of a class of five-year-olds. The first elementary proposition she introduced them to was, "God made all things;" with the following result:

*No.* 1.—Did God make this house?

*No.* 2.—God made the trees grow to make the ladders.

*No.* 3.—If God had not made the earth, what would have happened?

*No.* 4.—What would have been if not any thing had been made?

Just then school was dismissed.

An Irishman who had found employment in Connecticut, was one day mowing in the meadow of Mr. C. when he espied a large nest of the paper wasp hanging in an apple-tree. Having never seen one before he asked his employer what it was, and was told that it was made by an insect something like a bee. "Thin, be dad, I'd like the honey," exclaimed Mike. "Well," said Mr. C. good-naturedly, "if you will divide the nest into two parts you may have half the honey." Mike, without more words, stepped up and with his scythe cut the nest in two. Instantly the infuriated wasps surrounded him and began to sting him. Dropping his scythe, he used both hands vigorously to brush them off, calling, meanwhile, to Mr. C. who stood at a safe distance, "Mr. Clark! Mr. Clark! if ye don't come here and help me kill the bees ye shall have none of the honey!"

A GIGANTIC KITCHEN.

The German government has recently built a kitchen a thousand feet long and wholly of stone and iron. It is to be used to supply food to the army during war. Its machinery is driven by two 1,800 horse-power engines, and is capable of boiling down and condensing 170 oxen, grinding 320 tuns of flour, and making 300,000 loaves of bread daily. It is also able to supply enough preserved oats for a day's feeding of the horses belonging to an army corps of 280,000 men.—*Scientific American.*

What a magnificent Community this big kitchen will serve by and by when there is no more war and no more necessity for feeding men who only fight! Eh?

A CLEVER INVENTION.—The faculty of remaining in the water for a greater or less period of time, which has been enjoyed by mankind ever since the existence of the element itself, seems likely to be extended to fire, in the event of a fire-proof dress, the invention of a Swedish officer, Captain Ahlstrom, and which has come triumphant out of every trial, proving ultimately successful. At a recent experiment in Silesia, four heaps, consisting of logs of wood, were arranged in the form of a square, well covered with shavings and saturated with petroleum. They were then set light to, and speedily became a mass of flames. Into this fiery furnace, the glowing heat of which kept the spectators at a respectful distance, stepped Captain Ahlstrom, clad in his fire-proof dress. He moved freely about in the restricted space—some four feet square, formed by the heaps, leaning from time to time quite unconcernedly against the blazing piles, taking his seat upon one of the heaps, glowing with intense heat, he reclined there with as much nonchalance as though it had been a sofa. He remained thirty minutes in the flames without suffering in the smallest degree from the heat. Next day an experiment was made in Hohenzollern mine, with the view of seeing whether the apparatus would avail in the event of an explosion of fire-damp or any analogous accident. The principal of the gymnasium, who volunteered to test it personally, descended into a space which had been shut off the rest of the mine and filled with gas, and remained there for twenty minutes without experiencing the slightest inconvenience from the poisonous atmosphere. Captain Ahlstrom has sold his invention to Prussia for 50,000 marks.

## *ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.*

"How much real *science* is there in the present practice of medicine? I refer more particularly to the curing of disease by the use of drugs."

*Ans:* If the term "science" is used in its most literal sense: viz., to know, and its application be limited to therapeutics, there is, it must be confessed, but little science in the practice of medicine. One of the great medical lights of the age, John Hughes Bennett, M. D., F. R. S. E., of Edinburg, admits the difference of opinion upon this subject which exists among medical men, a difference of opinion which could not exist if the action of medicine were *known* to be always the same. From the huge mass of medicines simple and compound which are now consumed by suffering humanity, he selects only *four* which are *known* to be always reliable. They are, 1, quinine, in ague; 2, pitch ointment, in psoriasis; 3, male-shield fern, in tape worm; and 4, sulphur ointment, in itch. Other medicines are considered valuable, and more or less reliable; but only these four are what may be considered "scientific medicines." Their action is comparatively uniform and exact.

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—*Farmer's Friend.*

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